

REMARKS

Claims 5-7, 9, 11, 12, and 14-18 are pending in the current application.

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Office Action dated August 10, 2004 has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Claims 9, 11, 12, and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's Related Art (hereinafter "ARA") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,022,753 to Park et al. (hereinafter "Park") in view of U.S. Patent 6,077,643 to Kumar et al. (hereinafter "Kumar"). Claims 5, 6, and 15-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's Related Art (hereinafter "ARA"), Park, and Kumar further in view of U.S. Patent 6,159,654 to Machida et al. (hereinafter "Machida").

The rejection of independent claims 5 and 14 is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested. Independent claims 5 and 14 are allowable over the cited references in that each of these claims recites a combination of elements including, for example, "the photoresist is coated into a thickness of 1.0 to 2.0 μ m". None of the cited references including the ARA, Park or Kumar, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least this claimed feature.

The Examiner acknowledges that none of ARA, Park, nor Kumar disclose "the photoresist is coated into a thickness of 1.0 to 2.0 μ m" (claims 5 and 14). The Examiner suggests that Kumar's disclosure of coating photoresist A to a thickness of 7320 Å "is close to the thickness of 1 μ m" (Office Action, page 8, para. 2). Applicant respectfully disagrees. The minimum recited thickness of 1.0 μ m. is 37% thicker than the thickness of 7320 Å disclosed by Kumar, and none of the disclosure of Kumar or the other cited references would motivate one of

ordinary skill in the art that to increase the thickness of the photoresist of Kumar by an additional 37%. Accordingly, it would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to form a negative photoresist to "a thickness of 1.0 to 2.0 μ m" as recited by claims 5 and 14.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 5 and dependent claims 6, 7, 9, 11 and 12 that depend from claim 5, and claim 14 and claims 15-18 that depend from claim 14, are allowable over the cited references.


Applicants believe the foregoing amendments place the application in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Dated: December 10, 2004

Respectfully submitted,


By 
George G. Ballas

Registration No.: 52,587
MCKENNA LONG & ALDRIDGE LLP
1900 K Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20006
(202) 496-7500
Attorney for Applicant

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Washington, DC 20006
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